

Army Concentration Proposed to Increase Its Efficiency

Plan Advanced For Creating Large Units

System of Maintaining Isolated Army Posts Called Unnecessary and a Blow at Competency

Citizen Reserve Favored Reforms Would Reduce Overhead Expense and Provide Better Education

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Sensible people agree that we are going to need an army for many years to come. Many have advocated a system of universal training, but it must be admitted that the chances are against its acceptance by the country at large. If this plan is declined what is the alternative?

Some fundamental facts ought to be emphasized. We are a nation in all essentials, and national defense ought therefore to be really national and free from any possibility of state interference or inefficiency. Any questions arising ought to be decided in the light of common sense and past experience, not by sentiment or local prejudice.

The regular army must supply the commanders and much of the trained personnel. In the Civil War we experienced a great deal with civilians and militia, but at the end of the war, North and South with few exceptions the great commanders were graduates of West Point. If there has been considerable hostility shown toward the regular army in recent months, reasonable questions should be asked: "Where else could we find officers capable of meeting the responsibilities of modern warfare?" Were its deficiencies not largely the result of public indifference and political interference, or other conditions for which Congress and the country at large are to blame? Would the remedy not lie in improving the reorganization?

The following brief outlines of policy might be followed:

First—Abandon the system of isolated and unconnected army posts. Concentrate the regular army in divisions where it would be identified with certain parts of the country where its officers could acquire training in handling large units, where competition would encourage the able and show up the incompetent and lazy. This would, furthermore, reduce overhead expense and give better opportunities for education and other benefits for enlisted men.

Second—Create a national citizen reserve in place of the present militia system, this organization to be wholly under the War Department and free from all local police duty. Officers should be drawn from the present reserve corps and regimental commanders sought in all cases to be regulars. Where local organizations distinguished themselves in the recent war the national designations of the unit should be preserved.

Third—Relieve the state of all responsibility in national defense and where desired take over as Federal property all arms and other military property which they may not care to retain. The states can then organize their own local militia or preferably contribute for the maintenance of summer camps.

Fourth—Recognize the principle of universal liability to military service by an enactment whereby the machinery of a selective draft may be put in immediate operation on a declaration of war, or when Congress deems such action necessary for public safety.

W. A. R.

Ability in Last Analysis Is Put Above All Else

Competent Men in Office Called the Really Great Need of the Republic

To the Editor of The Tribune.

When all has been said in regard to the political situation, the fact remains that the individual office holder makes or breaks the Administration.

A worthless spellbinder can satiate hearts with promises. A capable administrator can quietly and effectively handle the questions that come before him or her. It doesn't much matter what a person believes if he or she is without the necessary ability to meet the demands of the position to which elected. Primary emphasis should be put on the individual and not on protestations of belief.

Let us seek out competent and qualified candidates instead of complacently voting for whoever thrusts himself into the limelight, and then criticizing the Administration during the entire time until we repeat the performance. And, above all, let us instill the practice of retaining office those who are satisfactorily performing their duties.

The party that is big enough to select only competent candidates is the one that deserves to, and will, continue in power.

T. G. H.

Conditions of the Platform Contest

The Tribune invites you to write planks for a Republican platform and to write letters about planks proposed by other readers through its columns.

For the best planks and letters The Tribune offers these prizes:

For the best plank \$500.00
For the second best plank 250.00
For each of the eight next best planks 100.00
For the best letter a daily prize of 10.00
For the best letter in the whole competition 100.00
The Tribune will make up a platform of ten planks to be determined by your votes. The ten issues receiving the most votes will be the planks. The ten planks that best express the chosen issues will be selected for the prize awards.

Each plank is limited to 100 words. Of two planks or letters of equal merit the shorter will be chosen.

Every plank and letter must bear the name and address of the sender, although a nom de plume will be published if the writer desires.

The contest will close at midnight, April 20, 1920. Manuscripts will not be returned.

The judges of the contest will be three of The Tribune's editors. They will base their decisions on sound thinking and healthy, clearness and strength of statement.

To-Day's Prize Letter

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: One of the first acts of the first Congress was a law designed to protect and uphold the shipping industry. Under that law and others enacted almost immediately American shipping reached a dominating position in the world. Our flag was carried to every port. Instead of paying tribute to foreign ship owners and leaving the nation helpless in the event of war (as it was in 1917), in 1825 American ships carried 95 per cent of all imports into the United States and 89 per cent of all exports.

At about this time another national policy was adopted under which we virtually invited the world to get the best of us on the seas. The result was that in 1914 only 9 per cent of United States imports and exports were carried in American vessels.

When we began seriously to prepare for the winning of the war, we found that we must build a fleet and \$2,000,000,000 or more were to be spent to accomplish this. We now have a fleet, but it cannot be maintained on the seas without the abrogation of treaties which place us at a disadvantage in competition with other nations.

Strict Adherence To Majority Rule In U. S. Demanded

Representatives Warned That People Have Will Which Must Be Obeyed to Safeguard Country

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Law commands what is right and forbids what is wrong, and we give expression to this interpretation of it by our writers, law, our courts and our legislative bodies. It points to progress, where liberty, free speech, suffrage and universal education ennoble our civilization, and here it adds much that we see in the spirit of our free press, greater publicity, open covenants openly arrived at, and diplomacy that is aboveboard or sincere.

Our assemblies, our councils, our conventions, all are aflame with our burning desires to reform, to hold fast to that which is good and to set our national house in order. The heart's blood of youth is rife with the unfaded glories that shine through the pages of our history, and from the tenderest thought in the mind of a Boy Scout to the rigid discipline of the veteran you may search in vain for a coward's excuse.

The square deal fails unless we share in voting our choice as to who shall be our national standard bearer, and we the people, fall with it. But if we may be heard and our choice acted upon the law will be defended, and we shall be its defense, choosing through our majorities.

Let our representatives beware lest they forget the law.

C. F. G.

Woman Suffrage Taken As Matter of Course

Idea That Problem Exists in Enfranchising Females Put Up to Ridicule

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Heaven knows this country is beset with enough real problems without seeking to imagine new ones! Some seventy or eighty of your readers have expended good energy in thinking up planks on the issue of "the woman voter," when, as a matter of fact, no peculiar problem of the kind exists.

Equal suffrage has so gradually been embraced in the United States that no sudden revolutionary changes have been experienced in the transition; now the difference is scarcely felt.

Of course, it cannot be denied that the abrupt addition of millions of new voters will seriously affect the results of elections. Inexperienced voters need political education, but that need is not a new one. It has long been the aim of the publicists to induce men to take a more active interest in the conduct of government and to educate them along that line. The same want may now be applied to the other sex.

A good deal is said about the "psychology of the woman voter." About the only apparent result of such discussion is to make women feel self-consciously "mysterious" and consequently experience the notion that they are expected and obliged to upset all calculations. Such a silly sensation only begets erratic and unreasonable voting.

Let us not weave artificial issues on flimsy or romantic bases. Plenty of worthy questions may well engage and tax our thinking powers.

J. W. FRIEDMAN.
26 New York Avenue, Brooklyn.

Defends Budget System Calls It Imperative Need in Promoting Economy

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: One of the greatest planks the Republican party can adopt is that of favoring the establishment of the budget system. We have gone along without a budget system only because our growth in wealth through the development of our vast resources supplied such enormous income that the cost of government attracted little public attention. The need of economy presses upon us the necessity of a budget, and the important thing is that we get the right kind of a system to start with.

In my opinion, the preparation of the budget should be placed in the hands of the Secretary of the Treasury. The consideration of the budget in Congress should be in the hands of a joint committee.

JACOB FEIT.

Great Army of Peace Demanded in America

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Aside from planks, the prize letter today in one of its paragraphs seems to prove that "money" is not in every case "the root of all evil" when it states that a well paid Ambassador from America may be able to prevent a war which would cost millions of lives.

Somehow this remedial suggestion does not in the least relieve the impression of the present insecurity of life created by the sudden call to war of citizens whose minds had been lulled by the line of construction instead of destruction. There is a danger to a world that knows better.

The inability to exterminate the same shameless all-Globe efforts of advancement for this conspicuous black and it always present. It is within

The original legislation under which American shipping prospered is still on our statute books, but it is rendered inoperative by treaties, the results of which give all the advantage of the so-called reciprocal arrangements to our foreign rivals.

For many years there has arisen periodically a wail of protest over the decadence of our shipping. The time has come for a decision. For we have created a fleet and recreated a shipbuilding industry.

The World War having proved again the vital necessity for an American merchant marine, the Republican party advocates the enactment of legislation that will secure the maintenance of our flag upon the seas. To make it possible profitably to operate American ships now afloat and preserve our shipbuilding industry at its present high capacity, treaties which place the United States at a disadvantage in competition with foreign nations must be abrogated, and laws must be passed to overcome the difference between the cost of American and foreign shipbuilding and ship operation, and secure for the United States equality of opportunity in the world's shipping.

DANIEL T. PIERCE.
61 Broadway.

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MAX H. REICH.
31 Thirteenth Avenue, Newark, N. J.

The Beer Keg At the White House Gates

THERE it stands flank to flank with the wine cask and the whiskey barrel—and the Eighteenth Amendment.

"Who goes there!—friend or foe?"—they challenge every candidate whose hopes and aspirations lead within the White House gates.

What the people of the United States shall and shall not drink promises to be a bigger issue than the Peace Treaty in the presidential campaign of 1920. Current Opinion for April has assembled the most interesting and important comment of the country on the wet and dry fight. How do you stand?

Can Two Play at "Ruling the Waves"?

"It just isn't done," John Bull says. But there's a fresh day breaking over the deep sea trade routes of the world. American merchant tonnage is displacing lots of green water here and there about the globe. And the pneumatic riveter sings a song of more ships, speedier ships, bigger ships.

It's got them worried over in England. Mr. P. W. Wilson, former M. P. and now of the London Daily News, tells the story of this new rivalry in April Current Opinion. Very much worth reading.

The World Skids Toward Bankruptcy

In 1914 the paper currency of the thirty principal countries of the world aggregated a little over seven billions of dollars. In November, 1918, it aggregated about forty billions. One year later it was fifty-one billions exclusive of thirty-four billions more issued by the Bolsheviks. And the national debts have increased at the same rate. It looks like involuntary world-wide bankruptcy. The light and dark sides of the question are set forth in a startling way in Current Opinion for April.

At Your Newsstand

Do you know that America today is building ships at most twice as fast as Great Britain?

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Party Facing 'Handpicked' Peril Again

Respect Will of People Expressed in Election of Delegates, Admission Given for Convention

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: As the pre-convention progresses, we hear on all sides more or less talk for "an open convention." It is urged that the delegates should go to Chicago "unpledged" in any way, and that after the convention has been organized there should be mutual consultation. Finally fifteen or twenty men, it is understood, in some "upper room" will determine who the candidate shall be.

This argument is largely put forth by those who belong to the old "stand pat" school of the Republican party largely reminiscent of the men who precipitated the debate at the convention of 1912. The men have failed to appreciate and learn the lessons of 1912 and 1916 and apparently bent on repeating the failure of the last two preceding Presidential contests.

The direct primary has come to stay. Men who are chosen in these primaries

will consistently respect the instructions given to them and will go to Chicago to put them into effect both as to framing the platform and in the naming of the candidates. What more than anything else weakened our party in 1912 was the total disregard of the popular primary results so decidedly expressed throughout the country and in 1916 the failure to get some such popular expression.

Let us not make a mistake in this year of grace and throttle the demand of the people as it is being expressed in the primaries of the several states so that a candidate may be nominated at Chicago who will not start with a handicap he cannot overcome by the time of the November balloting. All the signs for the last eighteen months have indicated that the Republican party stands to win this year; that the verdict of 1918 is to be repeated with stronger emphasis in 1920. Let the men and leaders of the party do nothing unwisely or suicidal in June at Chicago, and by a secret upper chamber conclave produce a handpicked result that will give aid and comfort to their opponents and will fail of ratification by the voters in November next.

Unless this situation is unequivocally met by the convention and a program platform is framed looking toward the future and not harking back to the past and a candidate is named who will wholeheartedly and unreservedly carry out the provisions of the platform, the Republican party may again in 1920 fail as it did four years ago, no matter how deserving may be the personality of its candidate.

ANTHONY P. FINDER.
406 Cannon Place, Troy, N. Y.

Some Suggested Planks

Limit Size of Army

We believe the potential military strength of the United States is practically unlimited. What we were able to do in the World War with citizen soldiers was a revelation and conclusively proves that we do not need a large standing army. We shall, therefore, approve of only so much of an army as will be a nucleus around which our citizens may gather in time of need.—Fred N. Parks, Norwich, N. Y.

Define Americanization

We demand the Americanization of all those within our borders who are being sheltered by our American institutions, and believe that a great national need today is an adequate definition of Americanism.—O. W. Frey, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Conserve Our Water Power

Development of the water power resources of the country presses for the formation of a sound business policy for this accomplishment. Conservation by utilization of the water resources, now lost to productivity because running to waste, demands their economic use. We favor a constructive program that will coordinate every phase of the potentialities of latent rainfalls, to the end that we may have industries diversified territorially and population distributed in the interest of homogeneous national growth and as a mighty Americanization instrumentality.—Edward Terrill, 166 Nassau Street, New York City.

Rule of Laws, Not Men

The Republican party believes in a government of laws and not of men. The Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land and not a mere scrap of paper to be disregarded at will.—Fred B. Hart, Oakland, Calif.

Winter Capital Proposed

California is one of the glories of our nation. California belongs to all the people. Its climate is the best in the world. We owe it to our President to give him the most beautiful environment. We should have duplicates of all public records, and our nation is great enough to have two capitals, a summer capital at Washington and a winter capital in California.—C. M. Sain, Logandale, Nev.

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Among the mass of suggestions for planks in the Republican platform are the following:

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